Ruth CRAWFORD

Two Ricercare

on poems by H.T. Tsiang

for Voice and Piano

THEODORE PRESSER COMPANY

Duration: c. 8'

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H.T. TSIANG

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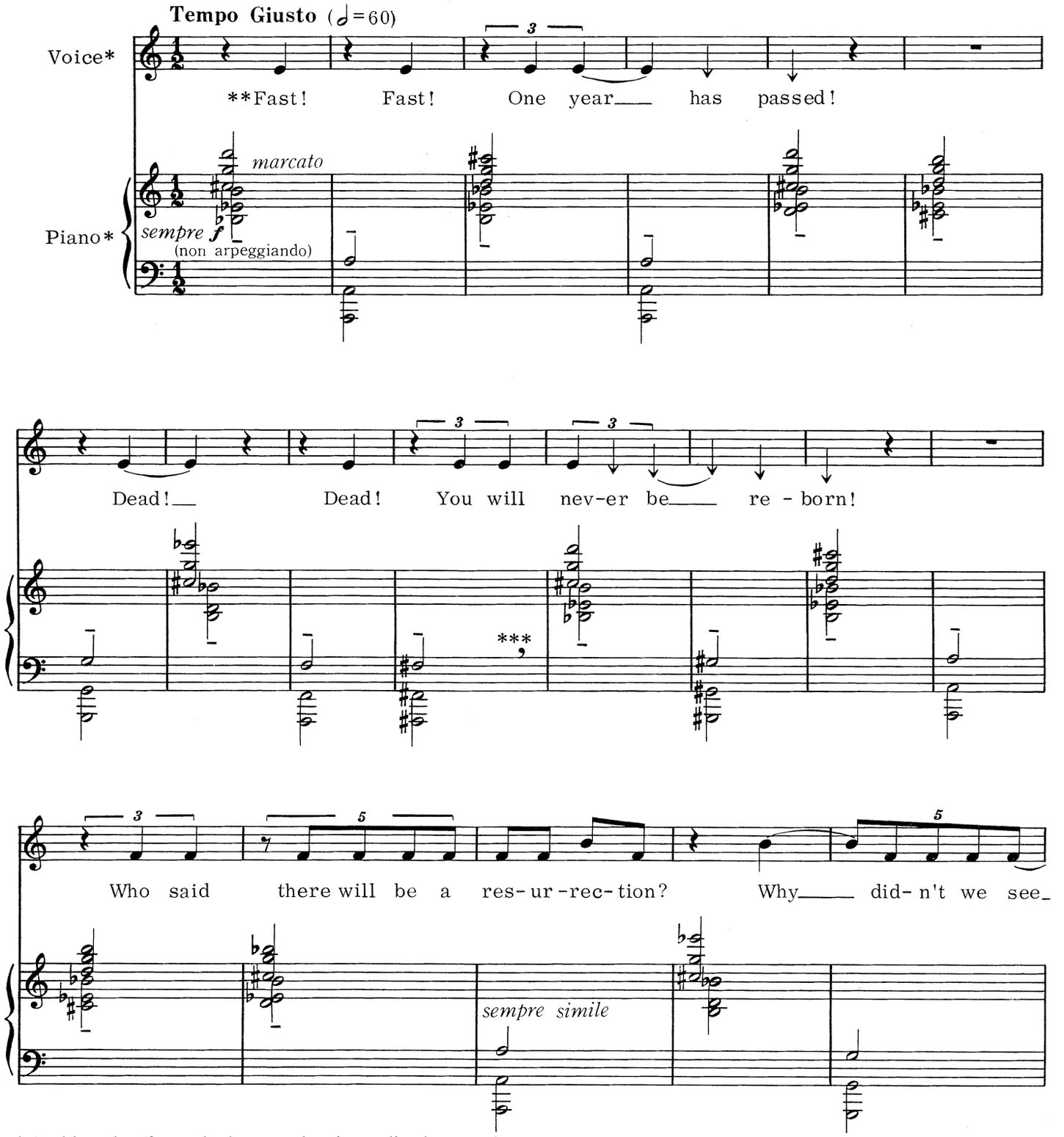
1. Sacco, Vanzetti

* Accidentals affect only the note they immediately precede.

** It is essential that the audience understand the words. If the effort to secure pitches as written should interfere with the clear rendition of the words, then those pitches should be regarded as general rather than as specific indications.

*** The triple-asterisk indicates the separation of recurring ostinato sections.

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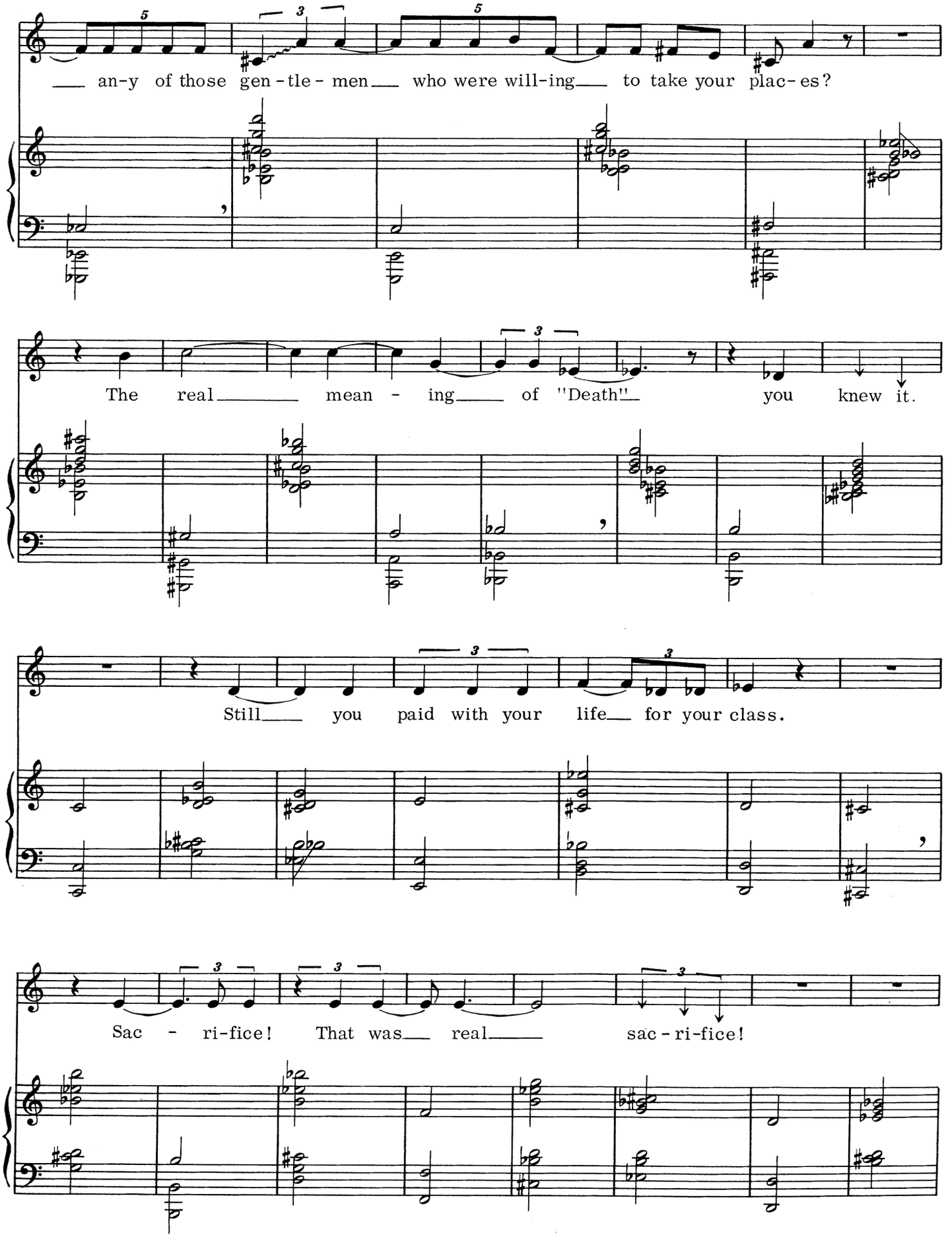
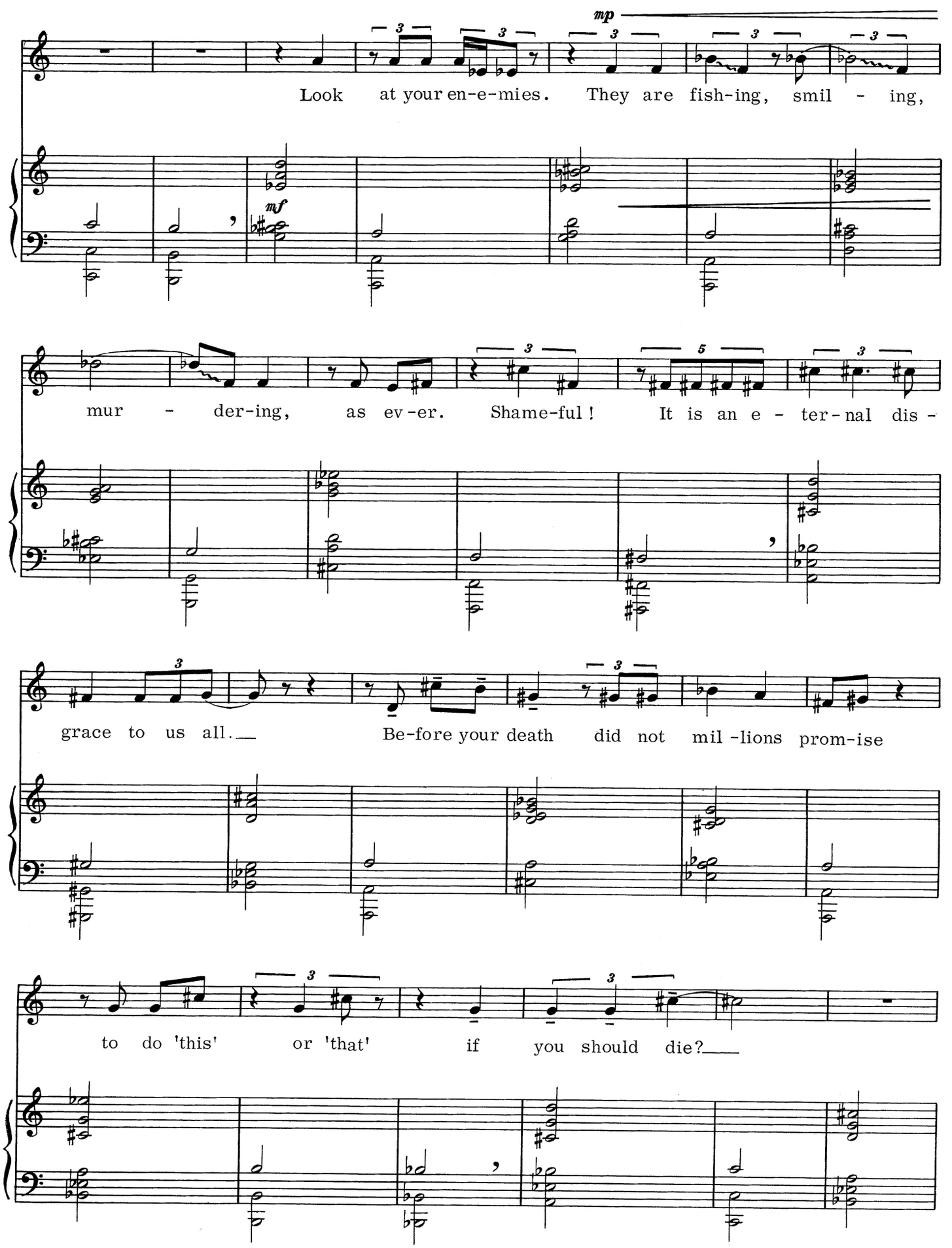
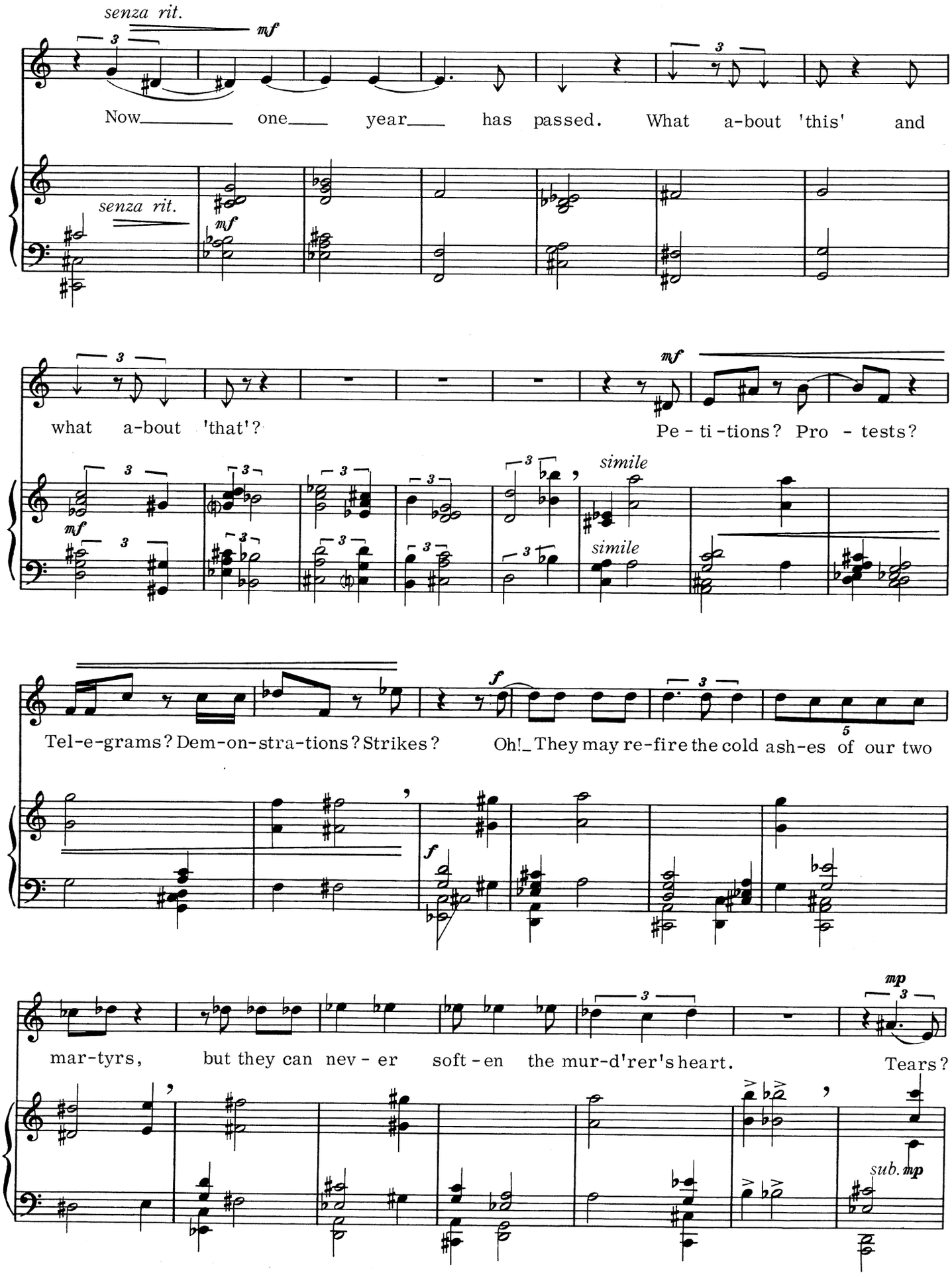
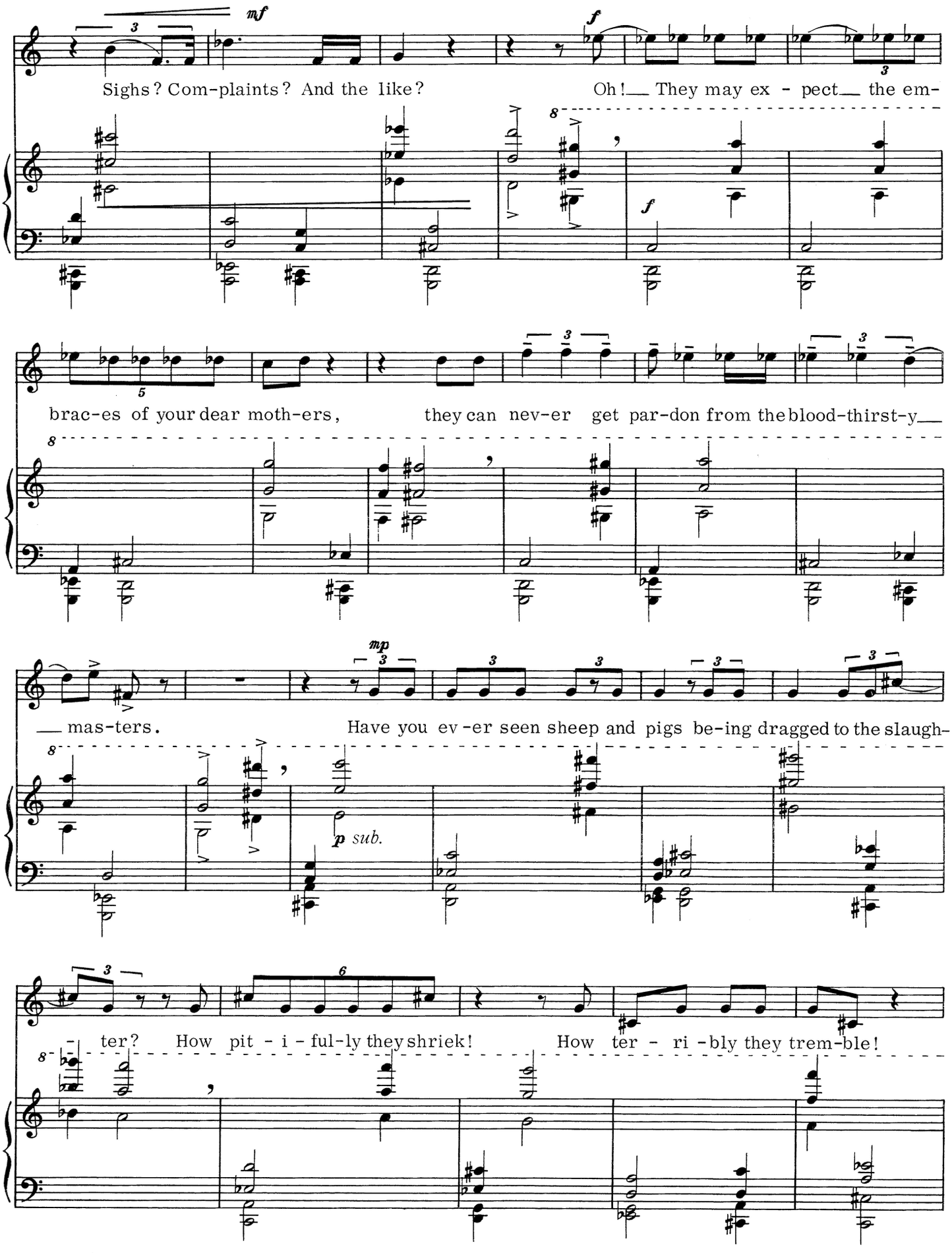
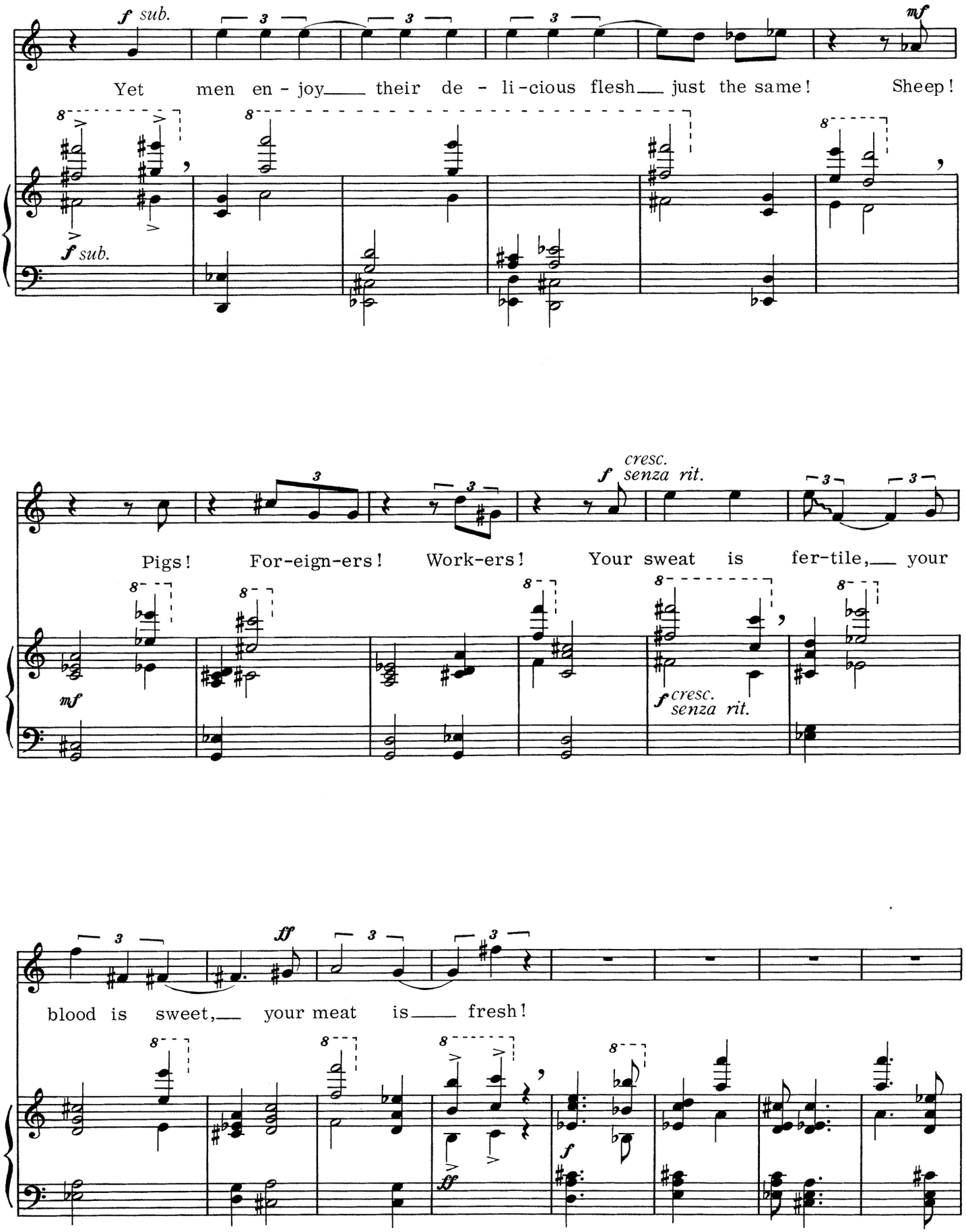
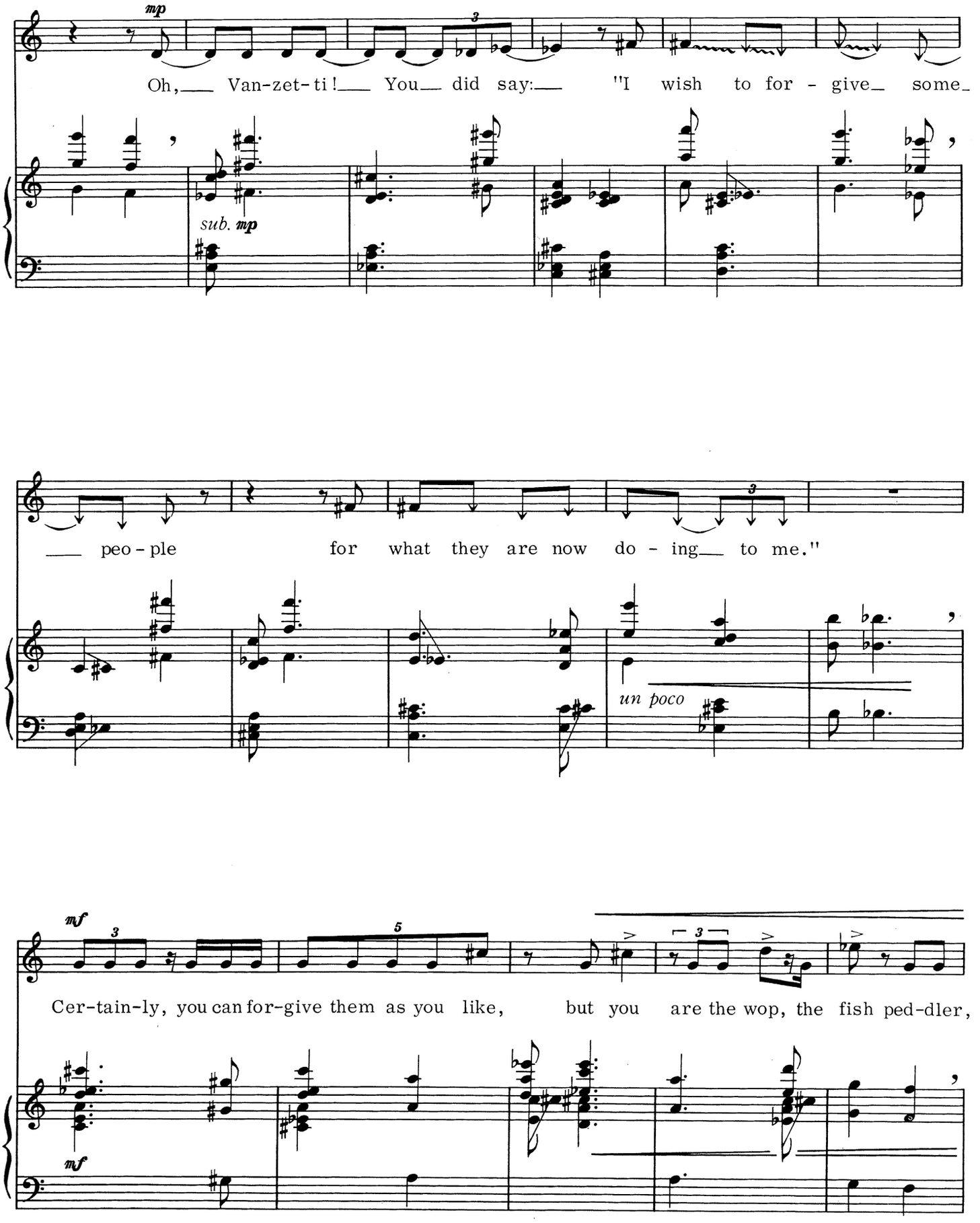
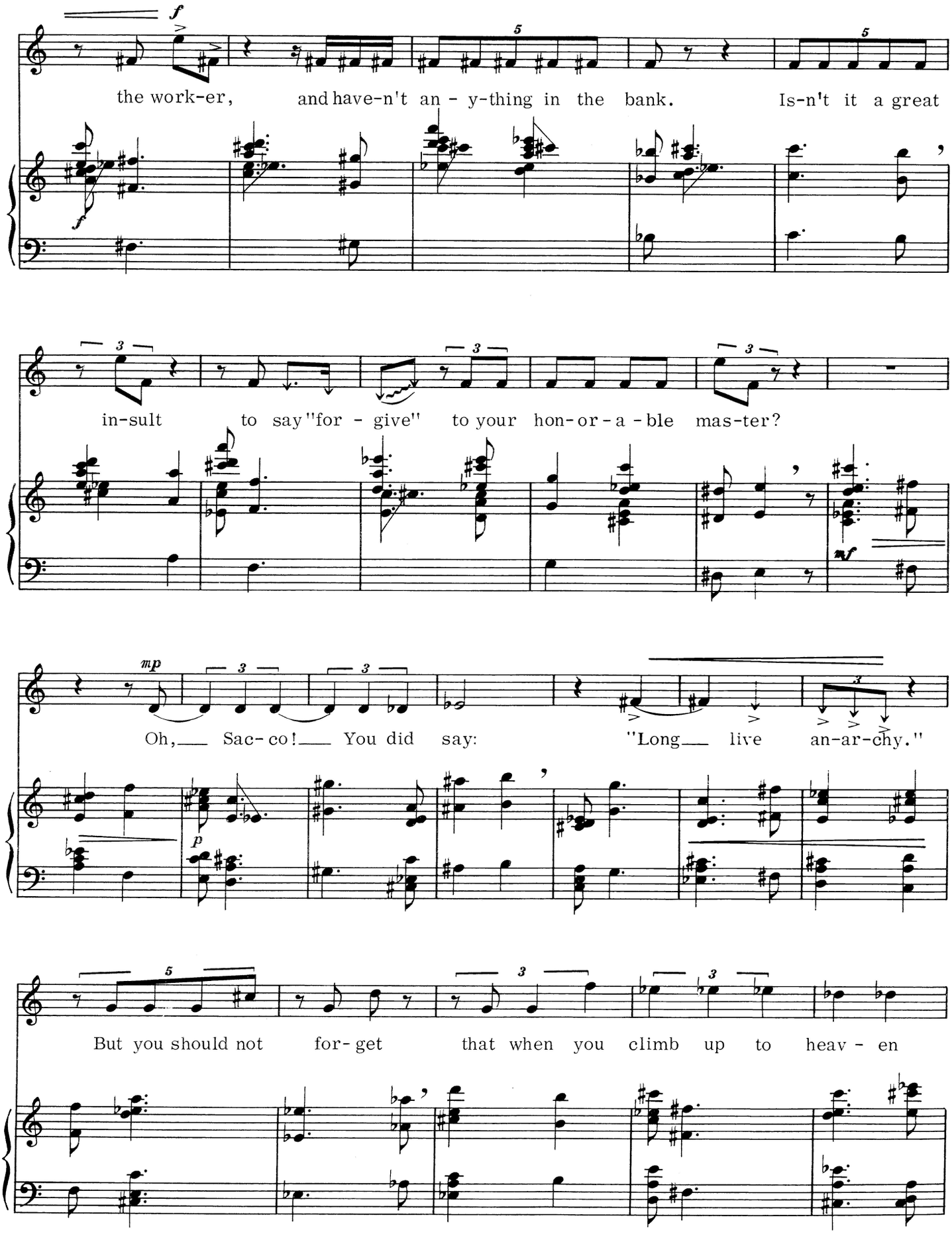
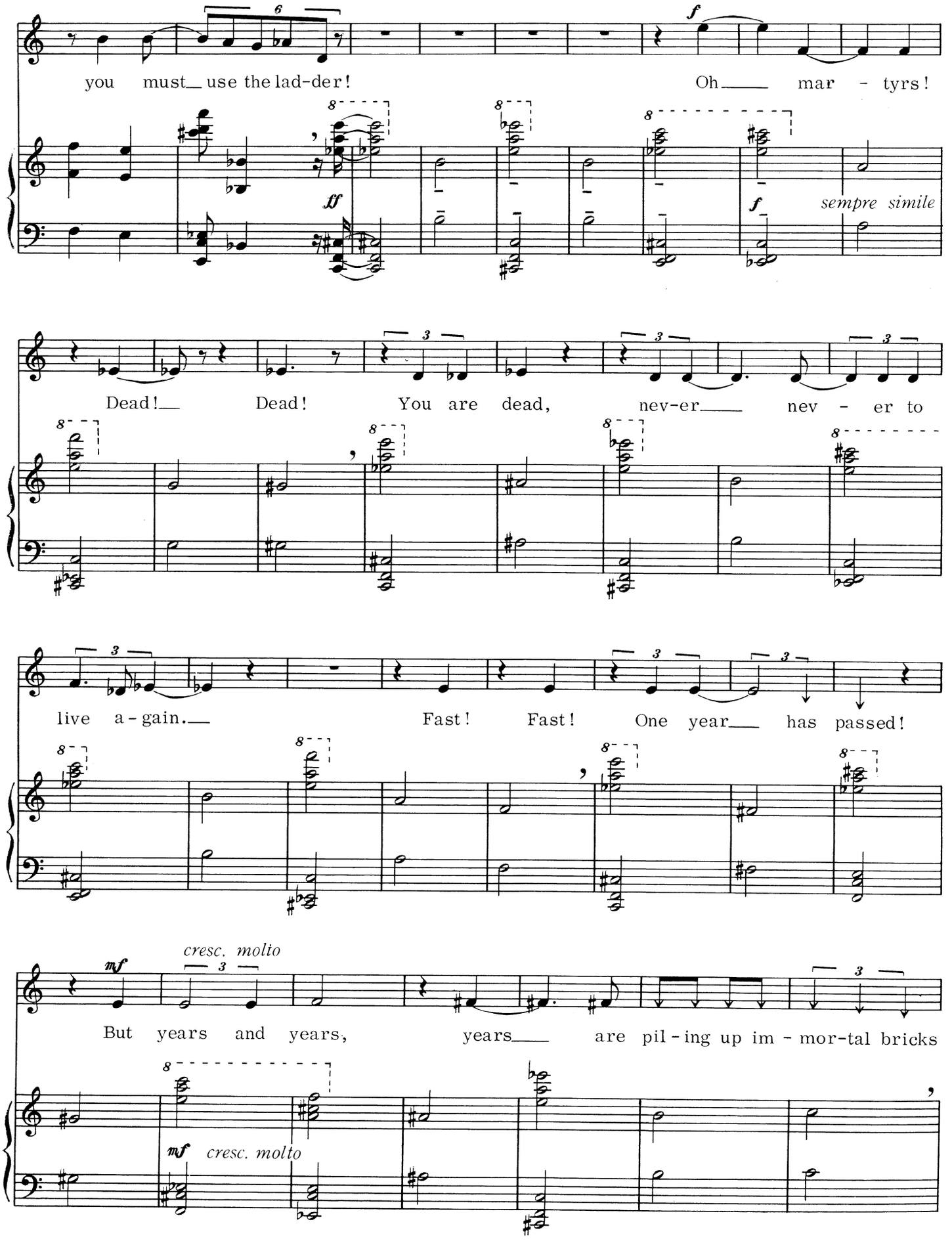
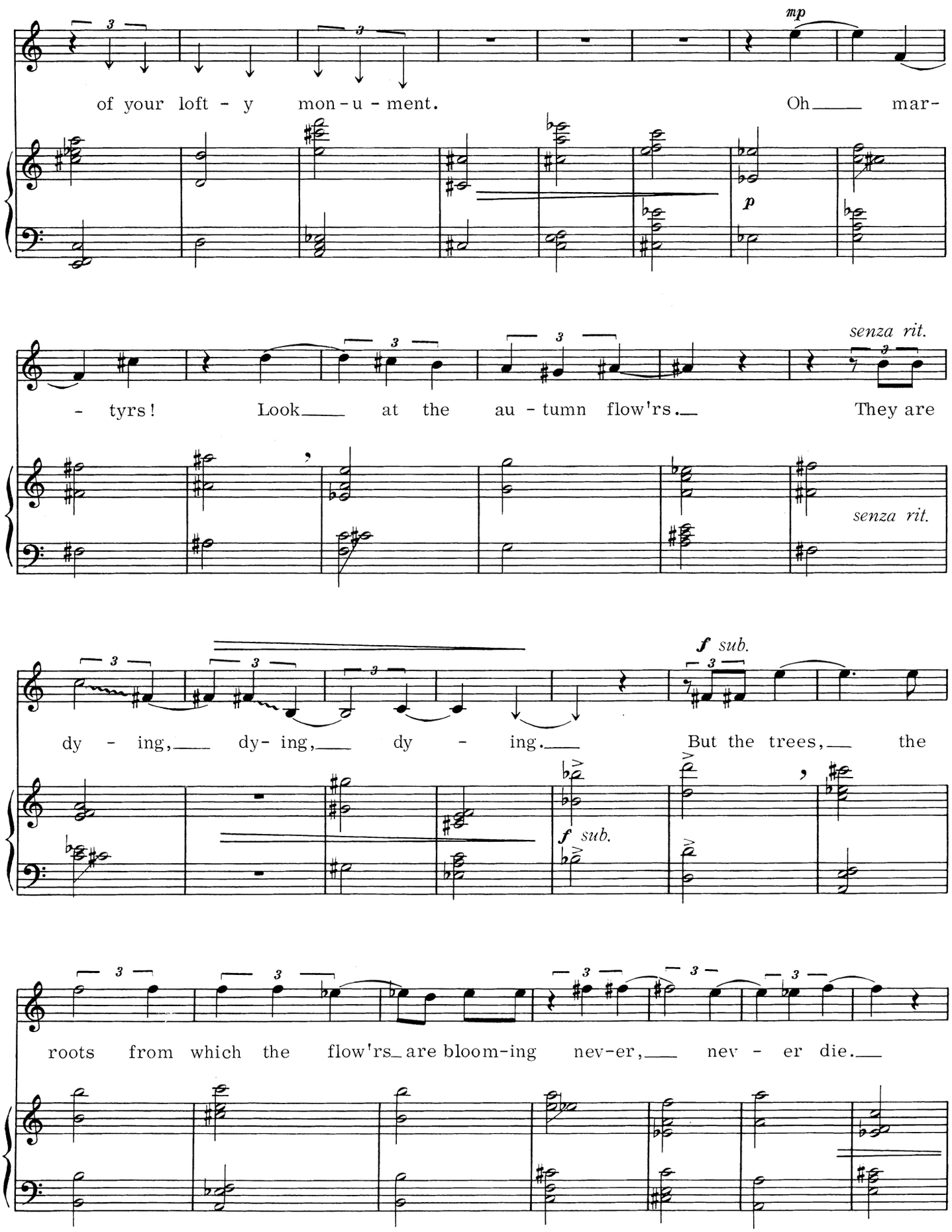
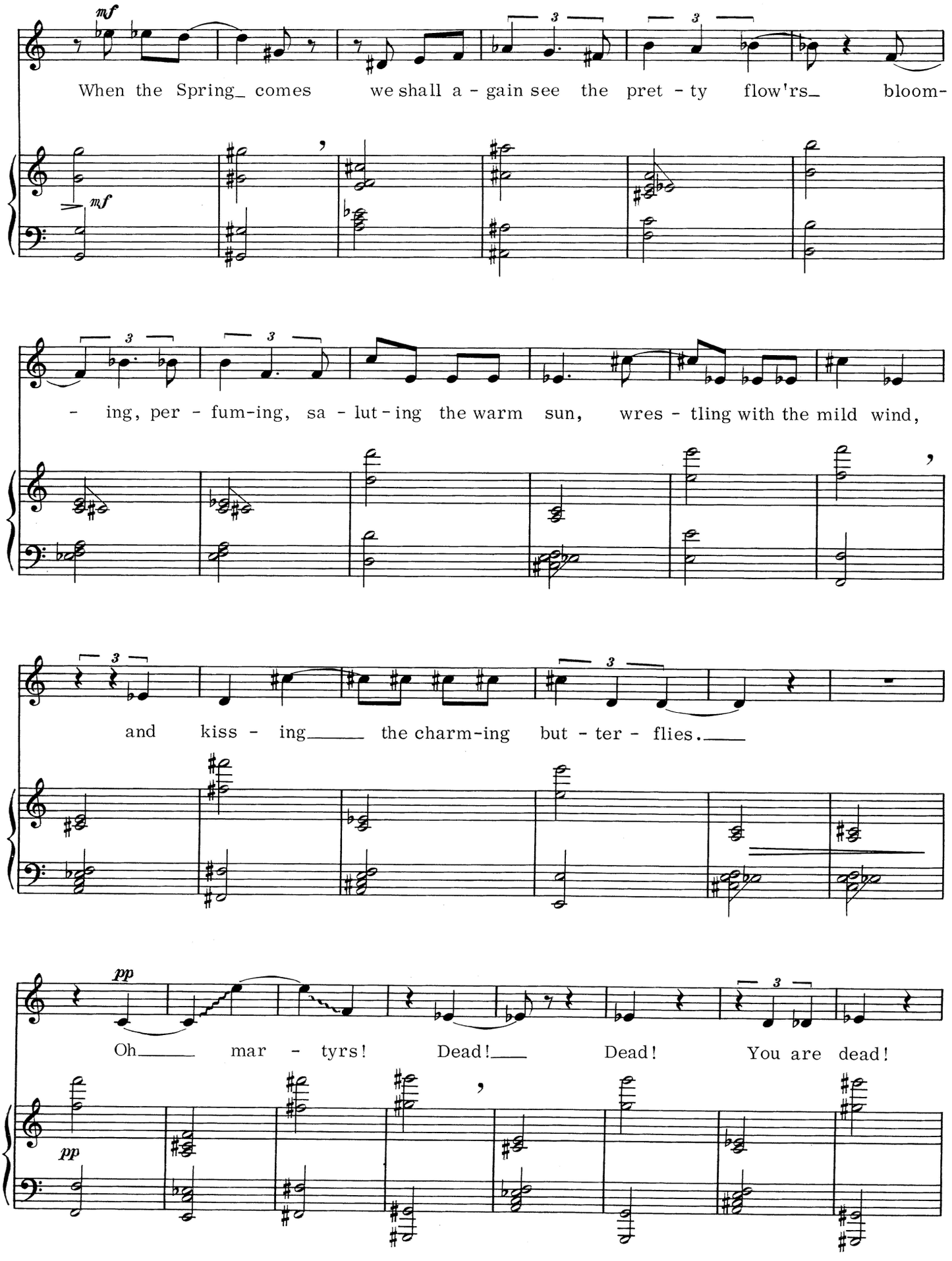
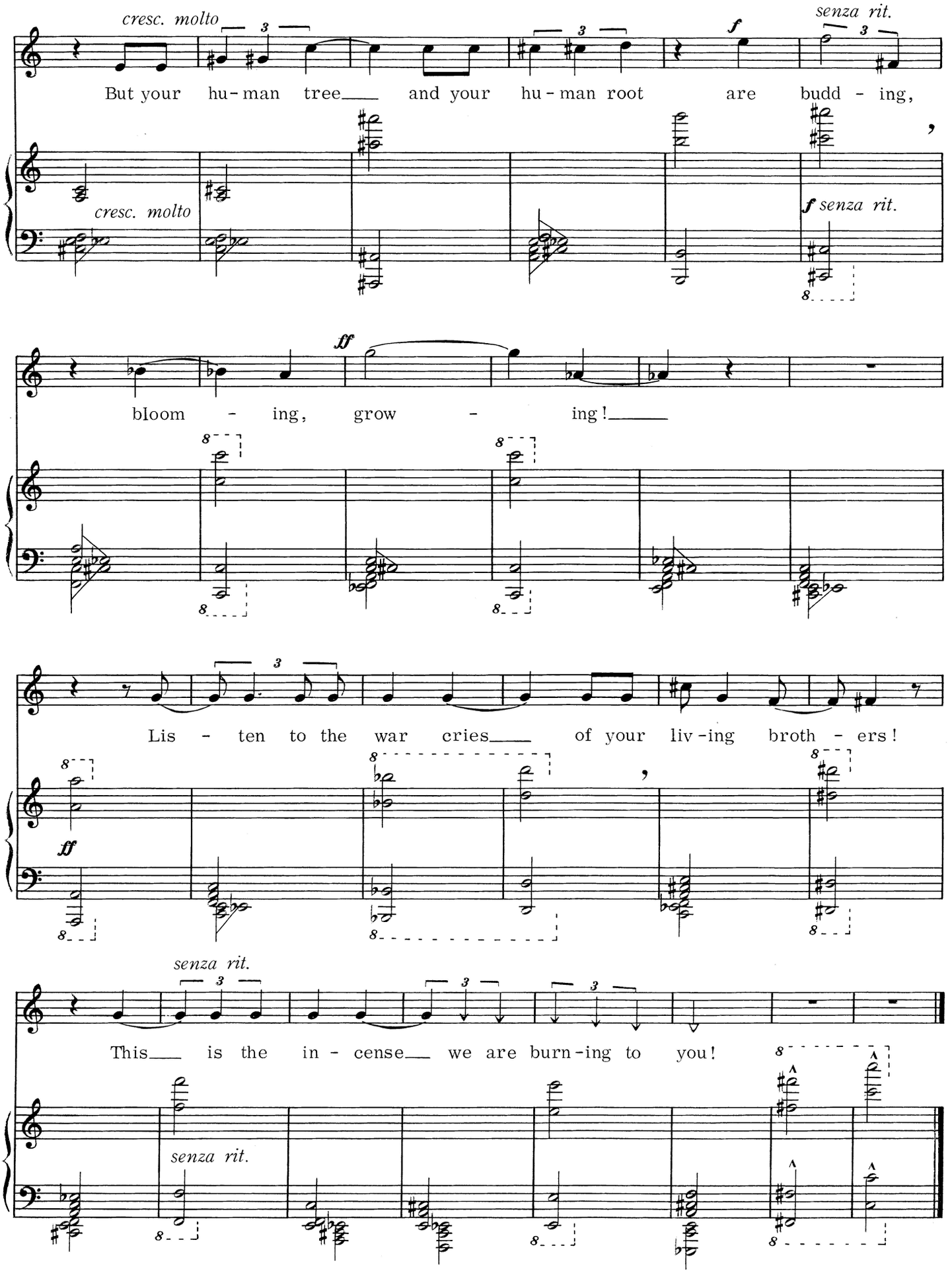
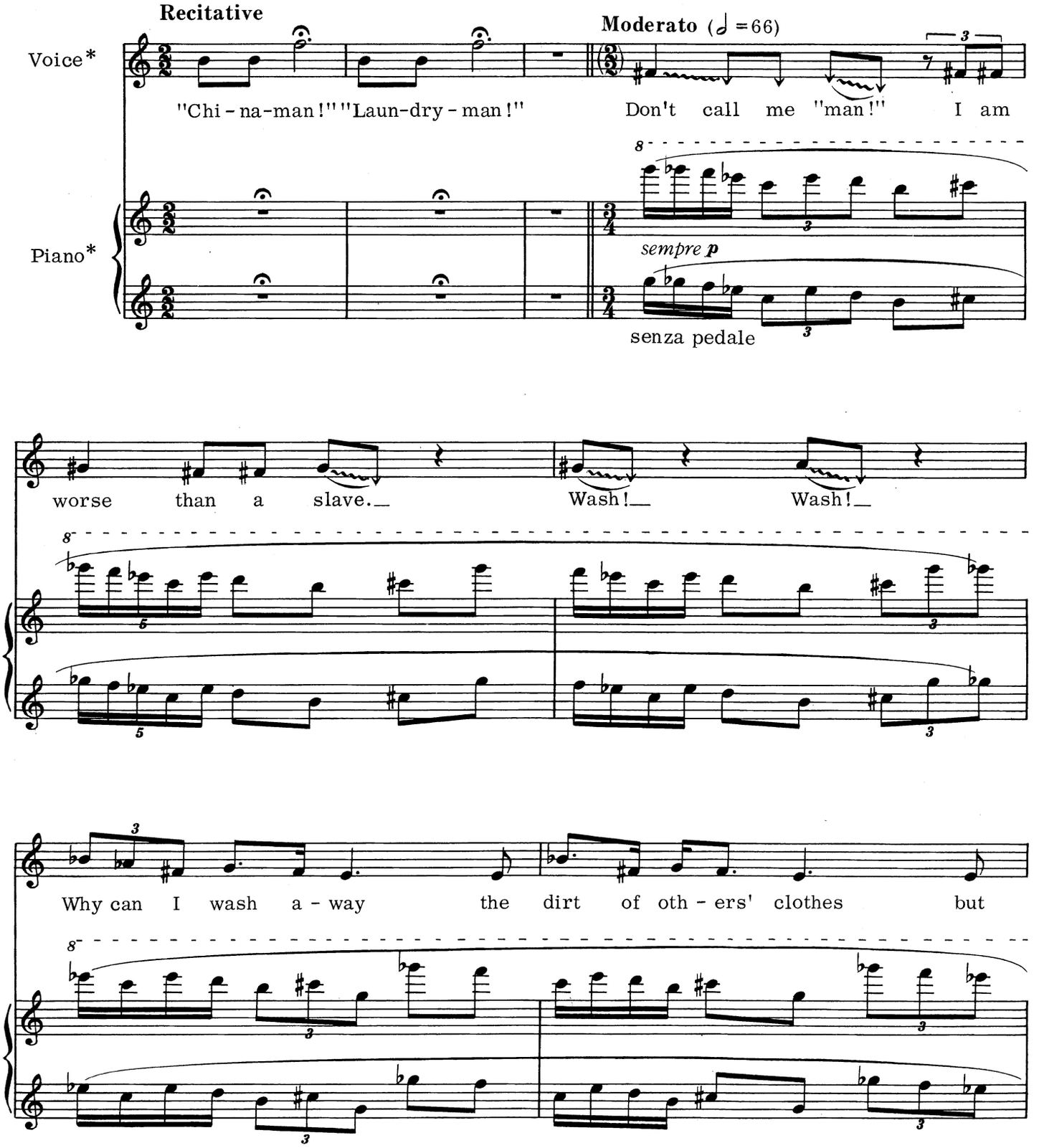

an-y of those gen-tle-men who were will-ing to take your plac-es?
The real mean-ing of "Death" you knew it.
Still you paid with your life for your class.
Sac-ri-fice! That was real sac-ri-fice!

mp
mf
Look at your en-e-mies. They are fish-ing, smil - ing,
mur - der-ing, as ev-er. Shame-ful! It is an e - ter-nal dis -
grace to us all. Be-fore your death did not mil-lions prom-ise
to do 'this' or 'that' if you should die?

senza rit.
mf
Now one year has passed. What a-bout 'this' and
senza rit.
mf
what a-bout 'that'?
mf
Pe - ti - tions? Pro - tests?
simile
simile
Tel-e-grams? Dem-on-stra-tions? Strikes?
f
Oh!_ They may re-fire the cold ash-es of our two
f
mar-tyrs, but they can nev - er soft - en the mur-d'rer's heart.
mp
Tears?
sub. mp

mf
f
Sighs? Com-plaints? And the like?
Oh! They may ex - pect the em-
brac-es of your dear moth-ers,
they can nev-er get par-don from the blood-thirst-y
mp
mas-ters.
Have you ev-er seen sheep and pigs be-ing dragged to the slaugh-
p sub.
- ter? How pit - i - ful-ly they shriek!
How ter - ri - bly they trem-ble!

f sub.
Yet men en - joy their de - li - cious flesh just the same! Sheep!
mf
f sub.
Pigs! For-eign-ers! Work-ers! Your sweat is fer-tile, your
f cresc. senza rit.
mf
f cresc. senza rit.
blood is sweet, your meat is fresh!
ff
f
ff

mp
Oh, Van-zet-ti! You did say: "I wish to for - give some-
sub. mp
peo - ple for what they are now do - ing to me."
un poco
mf
Cer-tain-ly, you can for-give them as you like, but you are the wop, the fish ped-dler,
mf

f
the work-er, and have-n't an - y-thing in the bank. Is-n't it a great
in-sult to say "for - give" to your hon-or-a-ble mas-ter?
mf
mp
Oh, Sac-co! You did say: "Long live an-ar-chy."
p
But you should not for-get that when you climb up to heav - en

you must use the lad-der!
Oh mar - tyrs!
sempre simile
Dead! Dead! You are dead, nev-er nev - er to
live a-gain. Fast! Fast! One year has passed!
But years and years, years are pil-ing up im-mor-tal bricks
cresc. molto
cresc. molto

mp
of your loft - y mon - u - ment. Oh mar-
p
- tyrs! Look at the au - tumn flow'rs. They are
senza rit.
senza rit.
f sub.
dy - ing, dy- ing, dy - ing. But the trees, the
f sub.
roots from which the flow'rs are bloom-ing nev-er, nev - er die.

mf
When the Spring_ comes we shall a - gain see the pret - ty flow'rs_ bloom-
mf
- ing, per - fum-ing, sa - lut - ing the warm sun, wres - tling with the mild wind,
and kiss - ing_____ the charm-ing but - ter - flies._____
pp
Oh_____ mar - tyrs! Dead!_____ Dead! You are dead!
pp

cresc. molto
But your hu-man tree and your hu-man root are budd-ing,
senza rit.
cresc. molto
f senza rit.
ff
bloom-ing, grow-ing!
Lis-ten to the war cries of your liv-ing broth-ers!
ff
senza rit.
This is the in-cense we are burn-ing to you!
senza rit.

2. Chinaman, Laundryman

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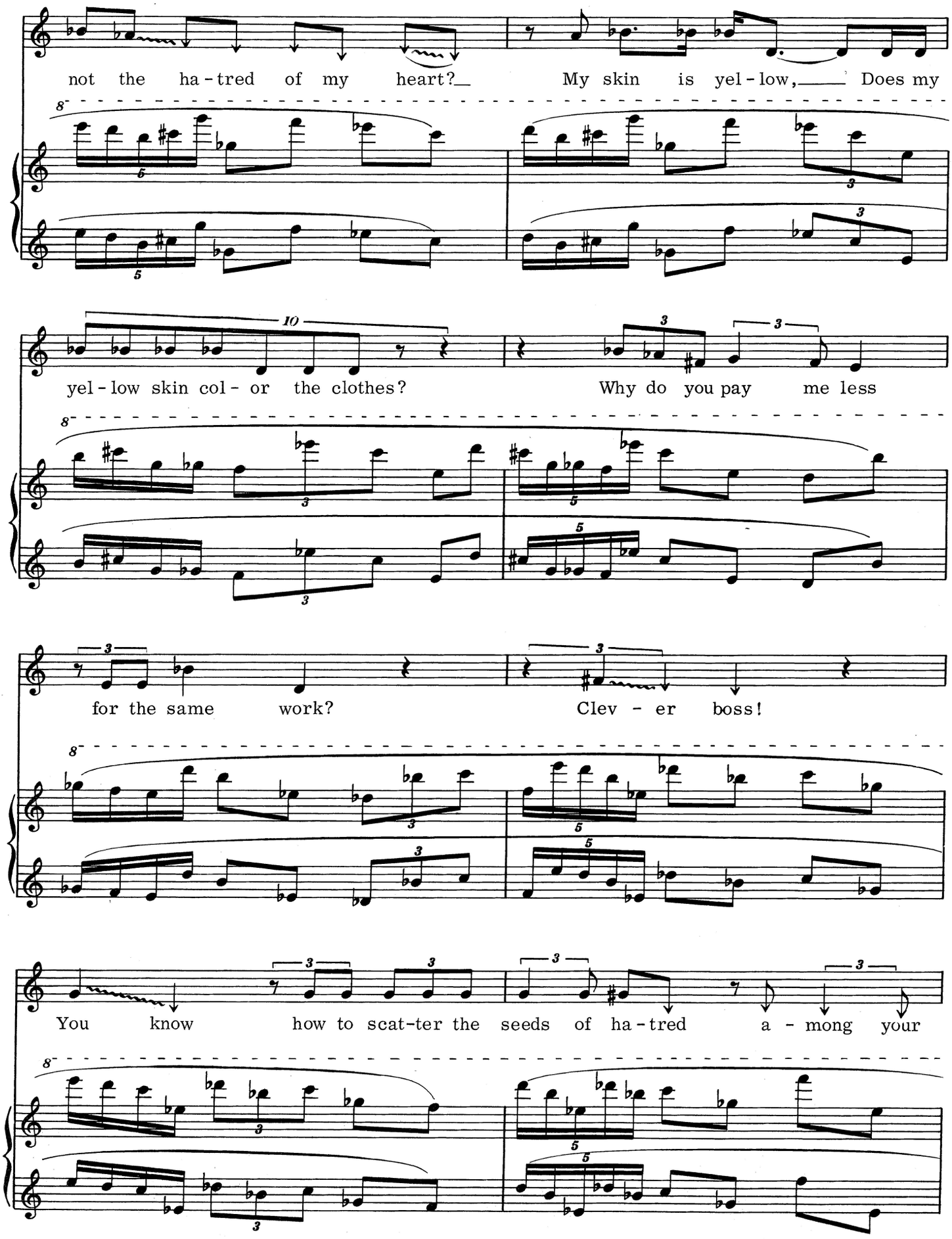
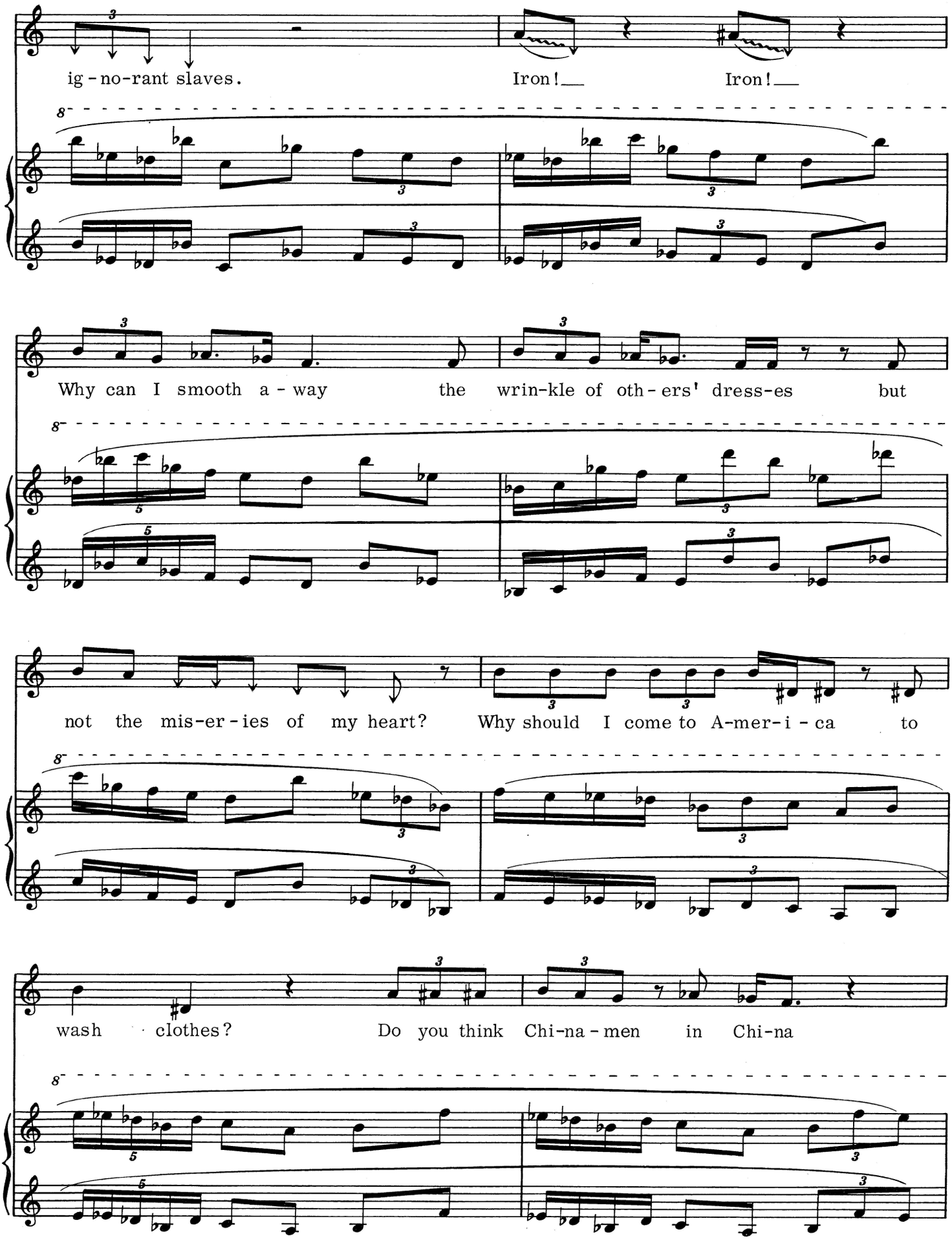
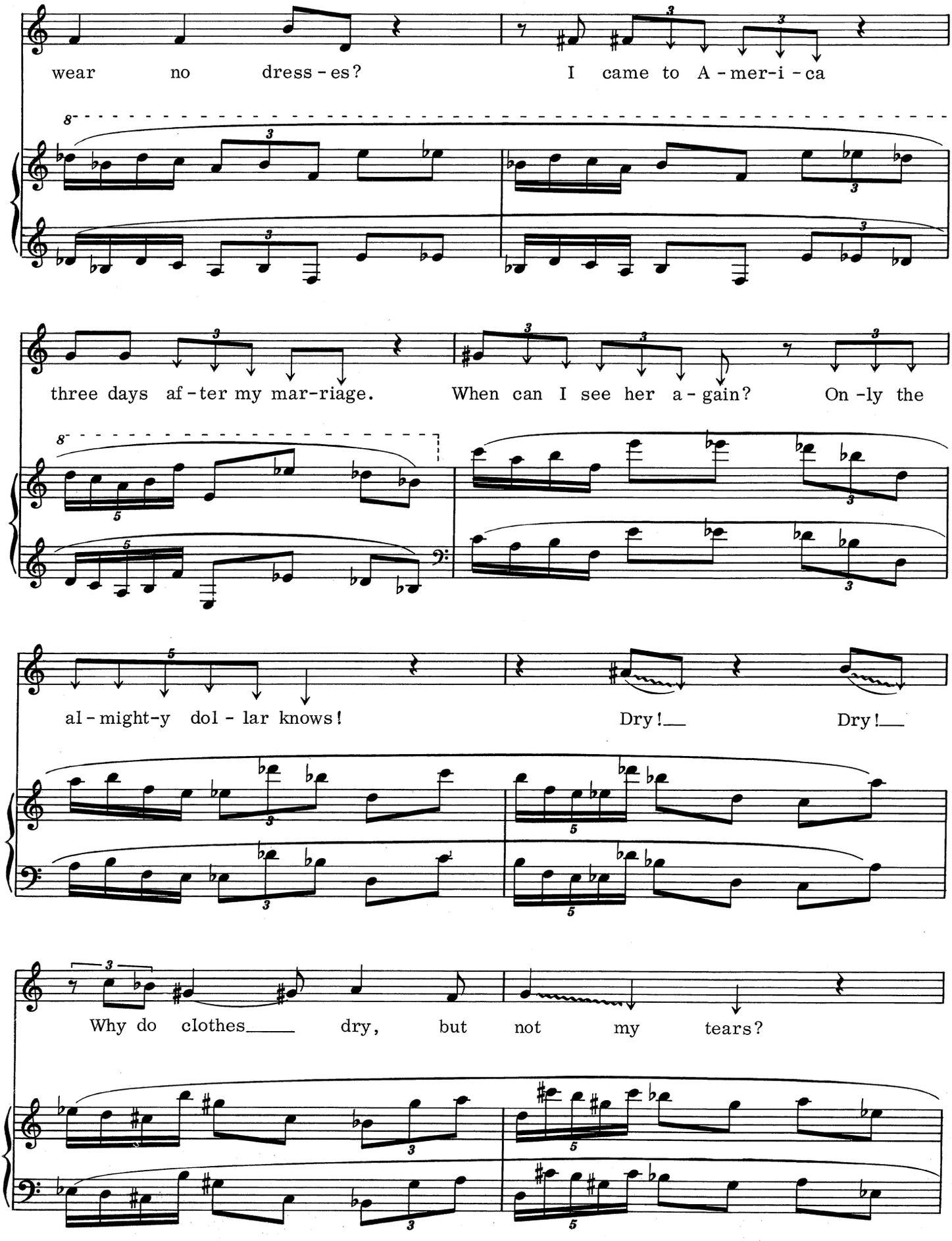
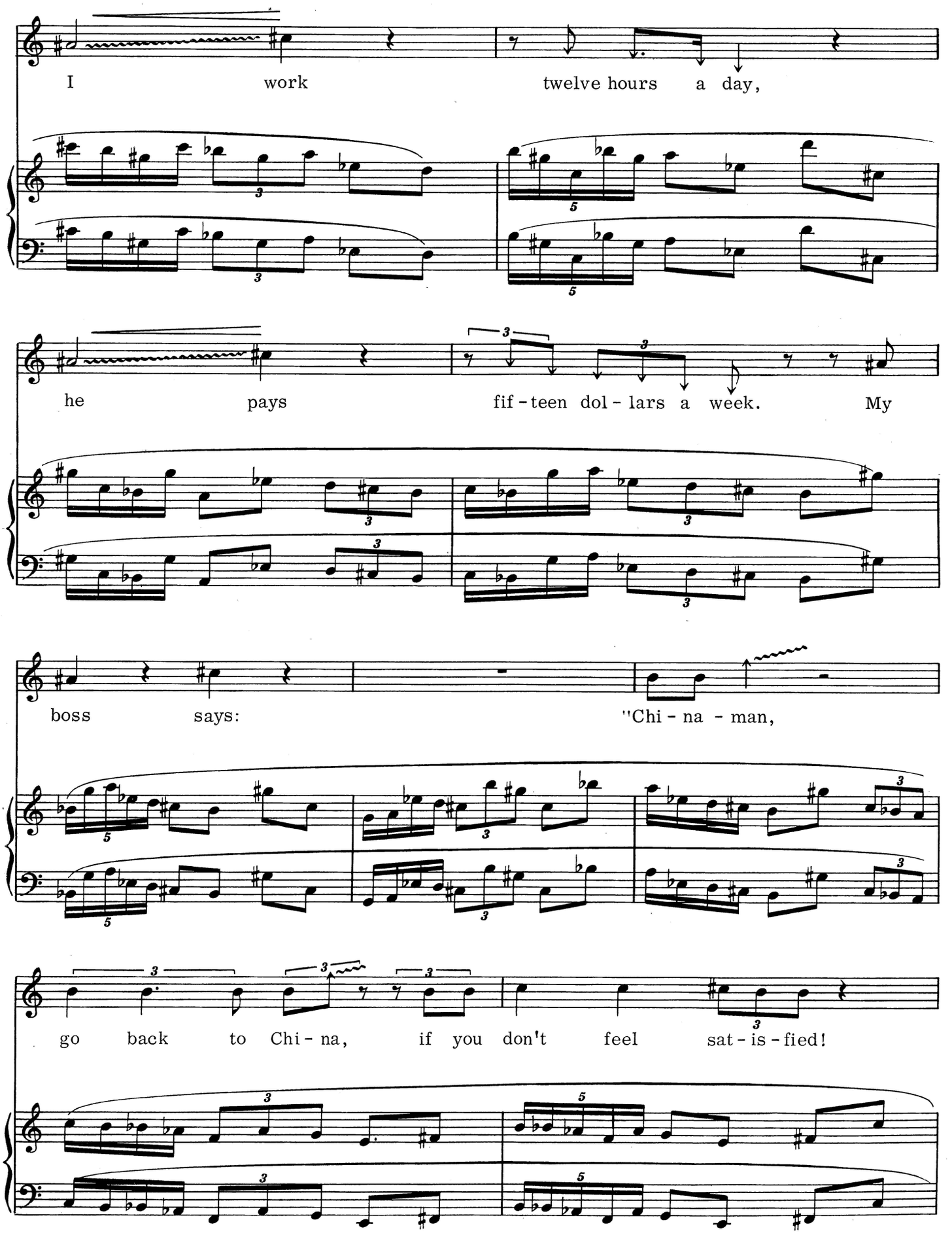
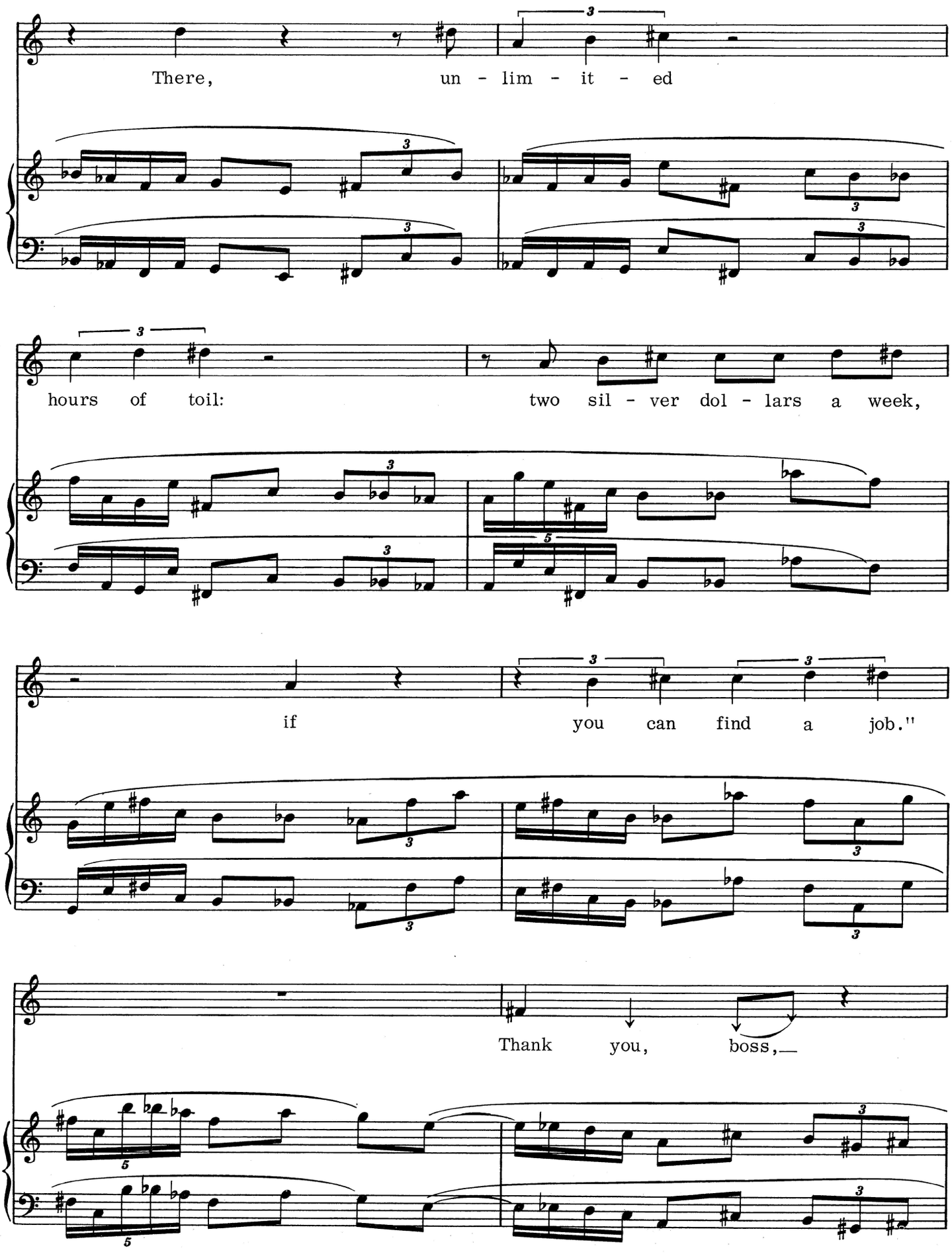
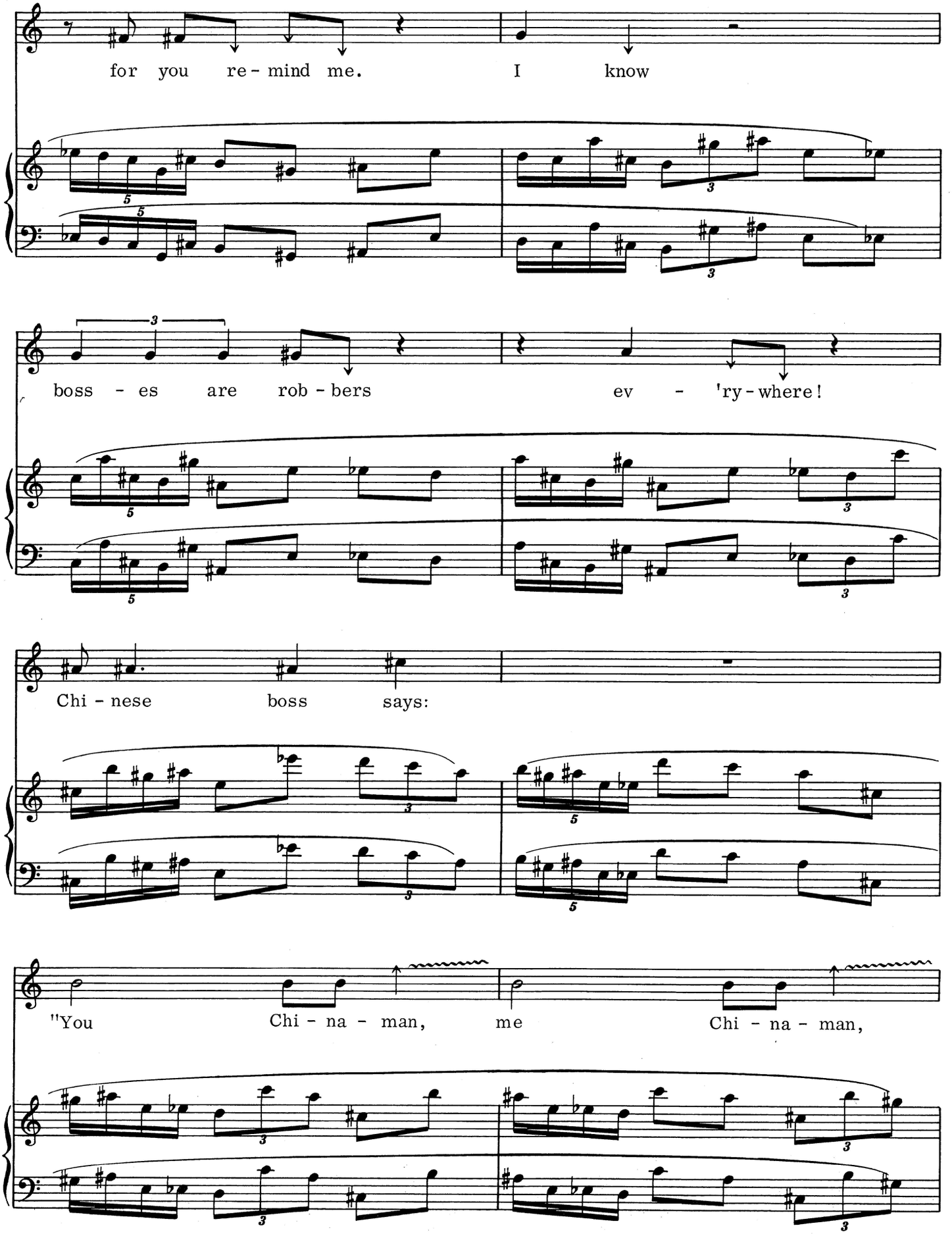
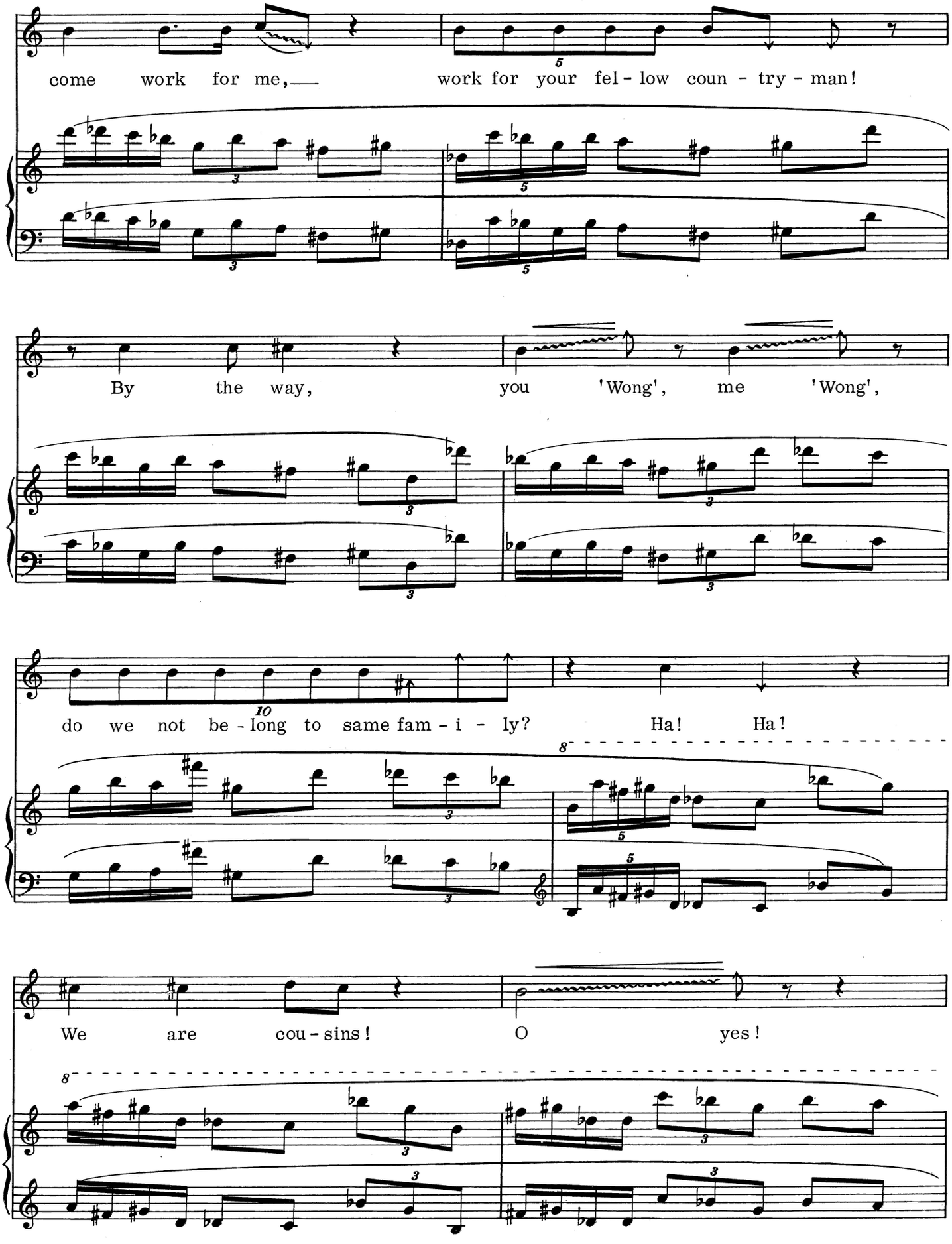
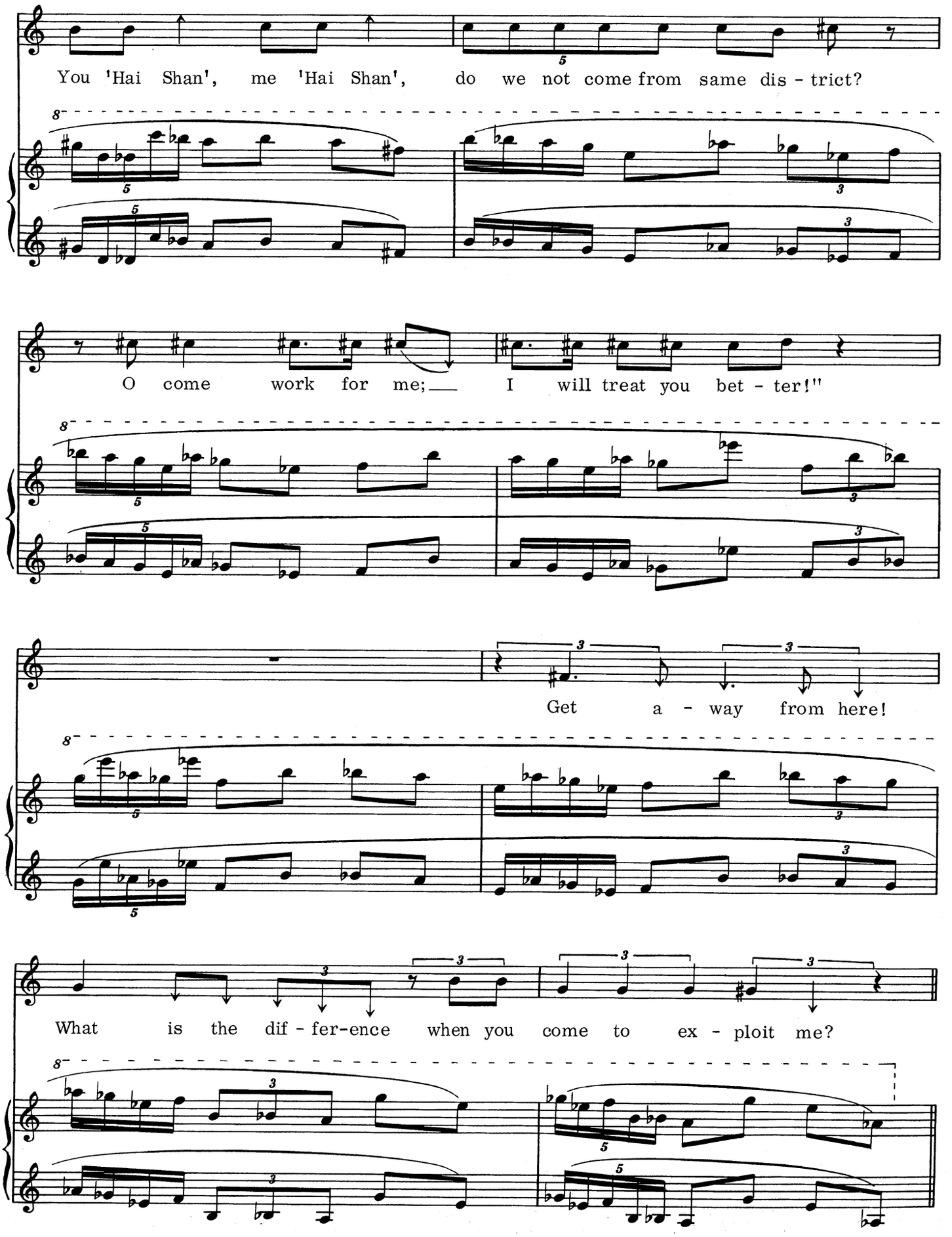
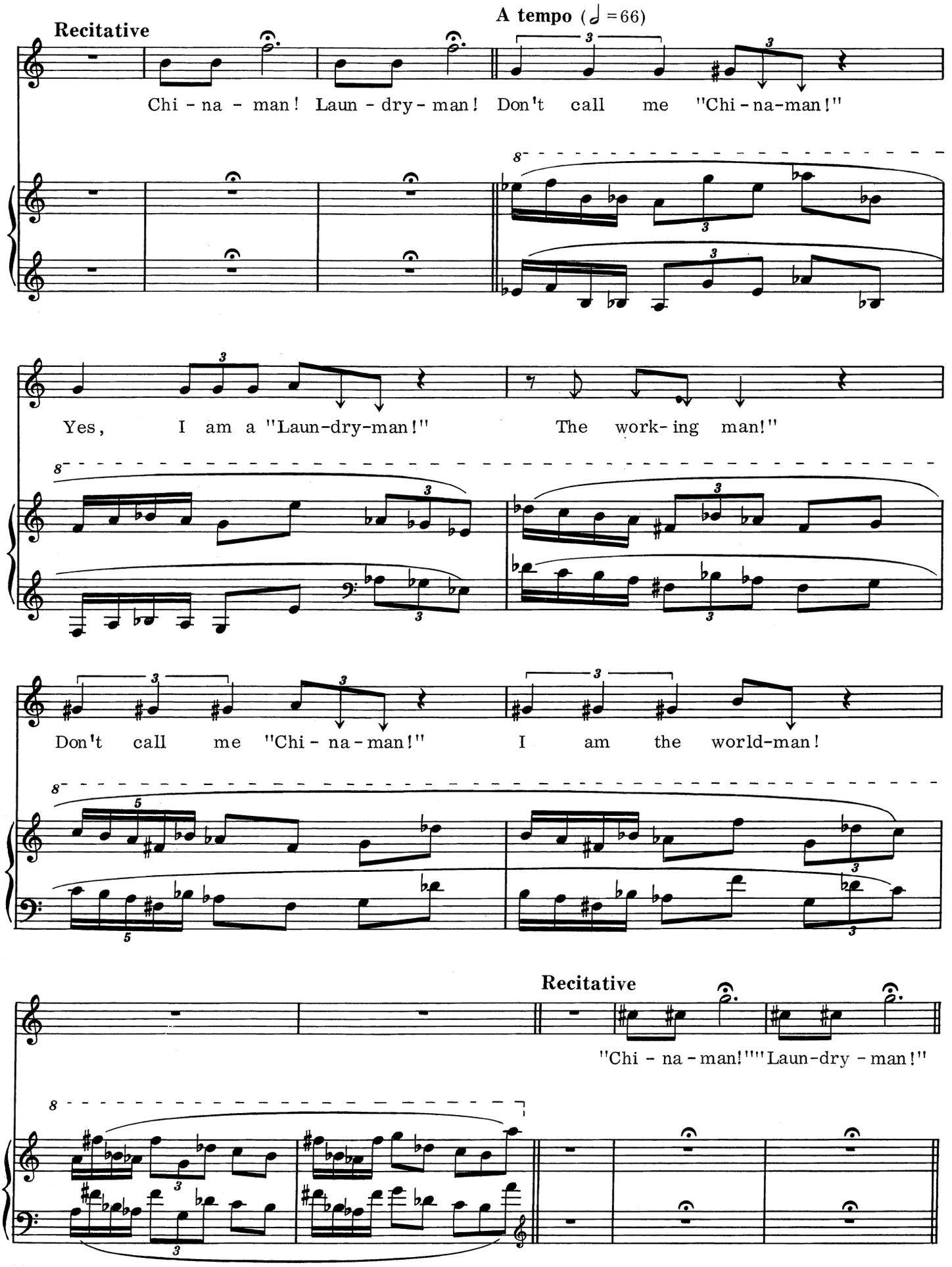
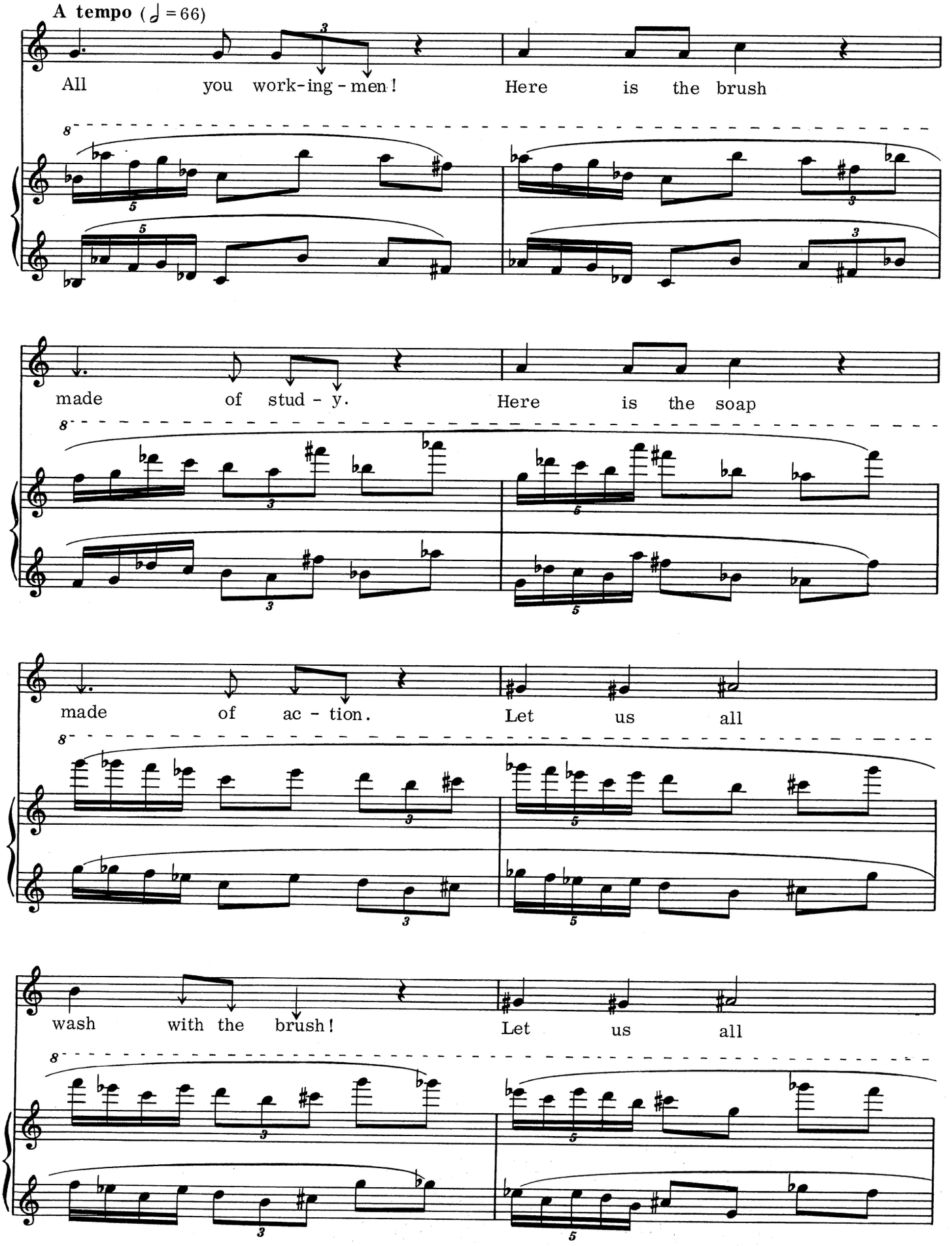
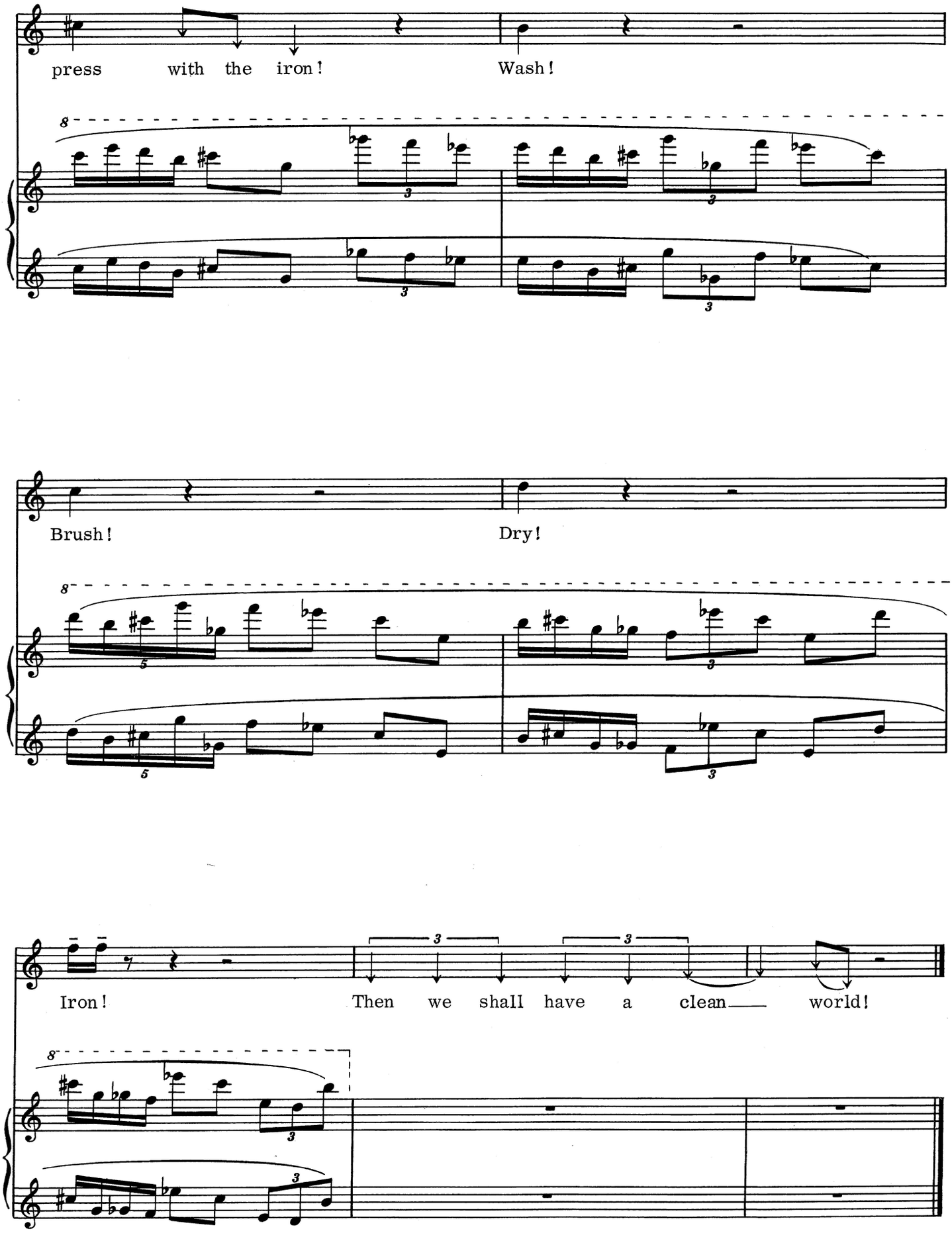

not the ha-tred of my heart?
My skin is yel-low,
Does my
yel-low skin col-or the clothes?
Why do you pay me less
for the same work?
Clev-er boss!
You know how to scat-ter the seeds of ha-tred a-mong your

ig-no-rant slaves.
Iron!
Iron!
Why can I smooth a-way the wrin-kle of oth-ers' dress-es but
not the mis-er-ies of my heart? Why should I come to A-mer-i-ca to
wash clothes? Do you think Chi-na-men in Chi-na

wear no dress - es? I came to A - mer-i - ca
three days af - ter my mar-riage. When can I see her a - gain? On - ly the
al - might-y dol - lar knows! Dry! Dry!
Why do clothes dry, but not my tears?

I work twelve hours a day,
he pays fif-teen dol-lars a week. My
boss says: "Chi-na-man,
go back to Chi-na, if you don't feel sat-is-fied!

There, un - lim - it - ed
hours of toil: two sil - ver dol - lars a week,
if you can find a job."
Thank you, boss,—

for you re - mind me. I know
boss - es are rob - bers ev - 'ry - where!
Chi - nese boss says:
"You Chi - na - man, me Chi - na - man,

come work for me, work for your fel - low coun - try - man!
By the way, you 'Wong', me 'Wong',
do we not be - long to same fam - i - ly? Ha! Ha!
We are cou - sins! O yes!

You 'Hai Shan', me 'Hai Shan', do we not come from same dis - trict?
O come work for me;___ I will treat you bet - ter!"
Get a - way from here!
What is the dif - fer-ence when you come to ex - ploit me?

Recitative
A tempo (♩ = 66)
Chi - na - man! Laun - dry - man! Don't call me "Chi - na-man!"
Yes, I am a "Laun-dry-man!" The work- ing man!"
Don't call me "Chi - na - man!" I am the world-man!
Recitative
"Chi - na - man!""Laun-dry - man!"

A tempo (♩ = 66)
All you work-ing - men!
Here is the brush
made of stud - y.
Here is the soap
made of ac - tion.
Let us all
wash with the brush!
Let us all


press with the iron!
Wash!
Brush!
Dry!
Iron!
Then we shall have a clean world!

Two Ricercare on poems by H.T. Tsiang
for Voice and Piano

Ruth Crawford was a pioneering subversive in both American music and socioeconomic politics. In 1932 she discovered H.T.Tsiang's polemic poetry in *The Daily Worker* (a NYC-based Communist journal), and two poems leapt out as dramatically expressing oppression of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, showing internal class struggle even within immigrant communities. This is the genesis of the songs "Sacco, Vanzetti" and "Chinaman, Laundryman." Musically, Crawford's rigorous modernism not only serialized pitches, but other elements as well. This explains the slightly surprising title TWO RICERCARE, a reference to the Renaissance precursor of fugue.

RUTH CRAWFORD (1901-1953) was born and raised in the midwestern United States and Florida; she resettled in New York City as a young adult, attracted by the new music scene. Crawford developed a technique that included serializing rhythms and dynamics as well as pitches, and she was a leading pioneer of this intense approach to detail often attributed to later composers. The *Andante for Strings* adapted from her *String Quartet (1931)* is often cited and performed as a leading example of her multi-element serialism.

After moving to New York in 1929, Crawford began studying composition with Charles Seeger, and they married in 1932. The folk singer and political activist Pete Seeger was Ruth Crawford's stepson, the son of Charles' first wife. From 1936 onward, Crawford worked primarily as an archivist of American folk music for the Library of Congress rather than composing.

Although Crawford married Charles Seeger in 1932 and lived until 1953, it is well documented that she only ever used her maiden name – both in publications and even in private documents. Only after her death, the Seeger family and music community appended her married name to her works. While she is most often referred to now as Ruth Crawford Seeger, that was anathema to this individualist.

More music by Ruth Crawford:

Andante for Strings
Diaphonic Suite for solo flute or oboe
Four Preludes (Preludes 6-9) for Piano
Piano Study in Mixed Accents
Rissolty Rossolty for Chamber Orchestra
Sonata for Violin and Piano
Three Songs on Poems of Carl Sandburg for Alto Voice, Oboe, Percussion, and Piano
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String Quartet (1931)

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